

The bill asking some form of relief to access of the unbundled network elements and protective government intervention of the ILEC's copper may seem to have merits on the surface but this without looking at the full history. For over 50 years the universal access fee has been paid to the ILEC's to provide current technologies to small markets. In the area I live which is service by Verizon there has been no upgrades in basic service in over 12 years. We do not have Frame relay (20 year old technology), DSL (5 year old technology), ISDN is charged by the minute (20 years old), etc. On the other hand the Universal fees have doubled and the basic rate per line have gone up 4 times in the last five years. This county has forty thousand lines just the fees from universal access in excess of \$200,000 per month and over 2.5 million per year to help the ILEC provide current technologies to the small urban areas. Where has this money gone, it has not been used for upgrades or expansion. Until the ILEC's account for this money and use it for what it was intended they should not be allowed any further relief.

Eight years ago the ILEC's were saying that the unlimited use of their lines for online access was costing them and that if this were allowed to go unchecked they would go out of business. But now they are using their point of contact to promote their own access to the Internet in a monopolistic manner. In this same amount of time the revenues and profits of the ILEC's are at historical highs.

The ILEC's have been subsidized for over 50 years for every line in the rural market. The old Contel area of Western North Carolina which has around a half million lines gets around 2.5 million a month in universal access fees but puts back less than this in one year for what was intended. Until such a time in which the current ILEC's use the current funds for the service in which it was intended they should not be granted any additional protection.

It is time for the taxpayers to stop lining the pockets of the ILEC's and people to be free to access the infrastructure that extra fees (taxes) paid for. The ILEC's keep the money but want to stop everyone else from deploying current technology in a timely manner. I further believe that all subsidized payments the ILEC's should stop until such a time that they can show that every area that they are being paid for is up to current technology.

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